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FOOD-FOR-FREEDOM NEWS FROM THE HOME FRONT

1942
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A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman and Dr. Hazel Stiebeling, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, September 23, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the NEC Blue Network.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Here we are in Washington ... with more news about the food-for-freedom campaign ... news on the home side of this nation-wide food production plan recently announced by Secretary Wickard. And to give you that picture right from the conference front, Ruth Van Deman has with her today Dr. Hazel Stiebeling. Last week Dr. Stiebeling took part in the conferences in Salt Lake City and Chicago, where the 1942 production goals were discussed and plans made for carrying them out in the 23 States represented in these two regional meetings.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

And very soon she'll be off to the next one. Tomorrow, isn't it, Hazel, you're due in New York for the meeting with Eastern States people?

HAZEL K. STIEBELING:

Tomorrow morning, ten o'clock.

KADDERLY:

We're lucky we could catch you here today.

STIEBELING:

I feel very lucky to be having a part in these planning conferences. As Secretary Wickard said in Chicago, this is the mightiest food production effort American farms have ever been called on to make. And all of us who've been working in the nutrition field are profoundly pleased that special emphasis is being placed on foods that build and protect.

VAN DEMAN:

A nutritionist's dream come true.

STIEBELING:

On the way to that. Of course we've got a long way to go before everybody in this country has a diet that measures up to good, by nutrition standards.

KADDERLY:

For instance, on the milk, Dr. Stiebeling. As I understand it, we just don't have the milk at present to bring our per-person-per-year average up to what you recommend from the diet standpoint and at the same time meet the demands for butter, and stock feeding, and industrial uses, and shipment abroad.

STIEBELING:

That's true. But that was one of the very heartening things about the meetings in Salt Lake City and Chicago. The way farm people were sure ways could be found to increase production from the present herds. They were setting as an immediate goal - a pint of milk more every day from every cow, just by better feeding and management.

(over)

KADDERLY:

A pint of milk more a day from the 24 or so million cows of the country, is much more than a drop in the bucket.

VAN DEMAN:

Those 24 million extra pints will help considerably to make the cheese, and evaporated and dry milk, we've promised to Britain under the terms of the Lend-Lease Act.

KADDERLY:

It will indeed. As you know, before June 30, 1942, we're committed to supply Britain dairy products that will require between four and five billion pounds of fluid milk. And their egg order -- 500 million dozen -- will take the output of 50 million hens.

VAN DEMAN:

And don't forget the 18 million pounds of poultry meat, and the billion and a half pounds of pork and lard -- also promised to Britain. Accustomed as we are to talking in millions and billions, these figures are a bit staggering.

STIEBELING:

I don't believe they'll stagger American farmers. Not if I interpret right the spirit of the conferences I attended. The attitude seemed to be just this. Tell us what this food production job is. We'll help feed Britain so she can work and fight. And we don't want to stint our own family living. We can, and we will, produce enough for ourselves and for the nations resisting aggression.

The plans under way for home gardens are just one example of that. In Salt Lake City we had a very informal conference at the breakfast table one morning on the farm home garden situation in the Western States.

KADDERLY:

I'll venture, Dr. Stiebeling, you heard some mention of grasshoppers and drought.

STIEBELING:

We certainly did. But the discussion didn't stop there. One man after another told some of the ingenious ways Western people have beaten the dry weather. Tin-can irrigation, for instance, and small farm reservoirs ... many ways they've brought water to the farm garden so the family can have its own fresh vegetables to eat.

VAN DEMAN:

And some to can.

STIEBELING:

Yes, in millions of farm homes these days, the canning budget goes right along with the garden planting plan, and the year's food plan.

VAN DEMAN:

The "planned pantry," as the Texas people call it.

KADDERLY:

A good many people are getting anxious about containers for canning food at home ... and pressure cookers for processing the non-acid vegetables.

STIEBELING:

Yes, that point was brought up at the conferences.

VAN DEMAN:

As near as we can find out there's no immediate cause for worry about containers for home-canned food. Of course there's not going to be any more zinc for new tops for jars, not while there's the present need for zinc for military purposes. But there are still a great many perfectly good old tops pushed back on cupboard shelves.

STIEBELING:

Some communities have set up an exchange for old jars and tops. It's helped people to clear out their attics and cellars.

VAN DEMAN:

And of course many glass jars have glass tops with only a metal clamp. For the present anyway the scarcity is in metals, not glass.

KADDERLY:

But what about the pressure cookers?

VAN DEMAN:

One of the men in the Office of Production Management called me about that again yesterday. He says there just isn't any aluminum now to allocate for home pressure canners. But he believes manufacturers can lick that problem and produce satisfactory steam pressure outfits of other materials. Also very soon we're going to see many more community food preservation centers opening up. They'll give families a place to bring their own fruits and vegetables from home and use larger scale equipment .. or pool their home outfits in batteries. The same equipment then will serve more families that way.

STIEBELING:

Of course all food canned that way - in community plant or in the home kitchen - releases just that much of the commercial pack. It leaves the commercially canned food for city families or others who have neither the raw food nor the equipment to do a home canning job.

KADDERLY:

And for the Army and Navy and for British purchases.

And as you suggested a moment ago, Dr. Stiebeling, the stepping up of farm home gardens will add greatly to our total vegetable supply. The commercial truck crops can go then to those who can't grow their own, because they haven't the land and can't make efficient use of seed and fertilizer.

I suppose we may be called on to do a little more substituting of some of the fancier kinds for the plainer. But that won't hurt us.

STIEBELING:

That's good marketing at any time ... to choose what's in season and most abundant and cheapest. Take the green vegetables, for instance. From the food value angle, green beans grown at home are just as good as broccoli, say, shipped in from a distance.

KADDERLY:

Might they not be even better, if the beans were fresh from the garden? Isn't it true that the longer vegetables are stored the more of some vitamin values they lose?

STIEBELING:

That is true, yes.

VAN DEMAN:

I was talking to an English girl the other day. She's been over here about two months now working for one of the British commissions. And of course the conversation turned to food ... differences between here and England. One of the things that struck her most, she said, when she first came over was the chance to choose between different foods of the same kind. She was almost bewildered. She was so used to eating just what was set before her.

KADDERLY:

Ration cards, as everybody now has in Europe, don't leave much room for choice.

VAN DEMAN:

And she was so used to cleaning up everything on her plate! She said nobody in England leaves a last bite out of a mistaken sense of politeness or for any other reason.

STIEBELING:

I expect our waste of food strikes her as nothing short of prodigal.

VAN DEMAN:

I'm afraid it does. I noticed she ate every scrap of her potato skin that night at dinner.

KADDERLY:

Well, certainly the more thrifty using, and conserving, and preserving of food is one of our 1942 goals too.

STIEBELING:

Why wait till 1942?

KADDERLY:

I guess I was thinking about it as part of this big food production drive.

STIEBELING:

When it comes to being thrifty with food and eating to build health and morale, there's no time like the present to begin. And I feel that as producers gear themselves into this big job they've been asked to do, we as users of food have an obligation too.

KADDERLY:

I agree, Dr. Stiebeling, We have. And I know you've been instrumental in getting out some of the most helpful bulletins there are on wise use of food ... planning diets by nutrition standards and at a cost a family can afford.

VAN DEMAN:

I can speak to that, Wallace. Dr. Stiebeling's bulletin "Diets to Fit the Family Income" is one of our most demanded publications.

KADDERLY:

Still free?

VAN DEMAN:

Still free and still available.

KADDERLY:

I'll repeat that title in just a minute. ... But thank you first, Dr. Stiebeling, for the information you have given us on the better-nutrition-at-home part of the food production campaign plans discussed at those meetings at Salt Lake City and Chicago.

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